

# flea beetle life cycle

Leafy spurge flea beetles spend most of their lives – about 80 percent – underground, and do most of their damage to the weed during that time. The life cycle starts with adult flea beetles (**upper left**), which are

active from June through August. During this phase of the life cycle, which lasts 45-60 days, adults feed on leafy spurge, mate and lay eggs in the soil near leafy spurge plants. The eggs hatch in about two weeks (**upper right, egg and larvae emerging from egg**).

Larvae then burrow down into the soil and begin feeding on leafy spurge roots and shoots (**lower right**). As fall approaches and temperatures cool, larvae burrow deeper into the soil and spend the winter in dormancy. When temperatures warm up in the spring, the larvae break dormancy and resume feeding on leafy spurge roots. The larvae then pupate (**left**) and emerge as adults ready to start the cycle over again.

